H. R. FREEBORN, Gentlemen's Hosier, Glover, and Complete Outfitter
TO ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.—COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS, CROSS STREET, and 2, VICTORIA STREET (late of the Arcade).

HUSBAND'S NEW PATENT VENTILATING HATS, 35, MARKET-ST.

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Fresh Arrivals of Tea at
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ESTABLISHMENTS,
Opposite Town Hall, Salford;
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Fine Pekoe-flavour, 2s. 8d.
Finest Imported, Rich Pekoe-flavor, 3/- & 3/4.
Choicest Gatherings—Rich full-flavoured Lapsong Souchong, 4s.

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MESSRS. MICHAUX & CO. beg to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that for the future
MR. S. DAWSON,
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Will be their Sole Agent for England for the Sale of their Celebrated Velocipedes.
Purchasers will please observe that MICHAUX & Co. in large letters are on each Machine, without which none are genuine.

SILVER LEVER WATCHES £3. 3s. to £6. 6s
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Every Watch accurately timed and guaranteed.
JEWELLERY
Of every description, in new and choice designs.
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In great variety.
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Watch and Clock Manufacturers, Goldsmiths, &c.
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Dining and Drawing-room Clocks, Hall Clocks, Alarums, &c., in every variety. Lowest net prices only charged.

PURE WATER FILTERS at 5s. 6d.
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As Exhibited at the great Exhibition 1851. Silver Prize Medal Manchester and Liverpool Agricultural Society. Silver Prize Medal Middleton Agricultural Society.
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Works: Upper Medlock-street Hulme.

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To WINE it is a fact that many persons are pleased if they can say "We import our own." They have an impression that by so doing they not only get it cheaper but purer; and, besides, there is the honour of importing. They overlook altogether that those Foreign Dealers who seek them out are quite aware of this amiable weakness, and do not fail to take advantage of it to add some shillings to the price. To assist the impression they judiciously insinuate that their article is purer than what usually comes to England, and thus they lull that desire for comparison which would soon dispel the delusion.
These remarks apply specially to
GERMAN WINES,
And, in proof of them, we would ask those Gentlemen who buy such Wines to compare our
STILL HOCK AT
20s. with their own importing at 24s.
24s. Do. do. ,, 28s.
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36s. Do. do. ,, 42s.
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Even supposing the value to be equal, there is this advantage in buying here, that any quantity can be got when wanted; whereas, in importing, a quantity of money is locked up, probably for years, in an article not of every day consumption.

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THE TROPICAL BEETLE POWDER will destroy cockroaches, beetles, and crickets sooner and more effectually than any other preparation ever offered to the public. It is perfectly harmless to dogs or cats, as they will not touch it. The following is one out of a number of testimonials which the proprietor has received:—
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Just received, a Consignment of the
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READY-COOKED
MUTTON & BEEF,
SOLD WITHOUT BONE,
In 2, 4, and 6lb. TINS,
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J. W COTT, FAMILY GROCER,
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THE TRADE SUPPLIED.

WEDDING BREAKFASTS
BALL SUPPERS, and DINNERS Supplied, by
MESSRS. PARKER AND SON,
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In the most fashionable style, on moderate terms, including the hire of plate, china, glass, &c. An elegant assortment of Bridecakes always ready. Bills of fare for any number, with prices, sent post free. Late Purveyors to the Botanical Society.

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MILITARY TAILOR
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[In the case of those names which are marked with an asterisk (*) a more detailed advertisement appears in another column.]

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*Tropical Beetle Powder; E. GRIFFITHS HUGHES, Chemist, Cateaton-street, Manchester.
*Tic Doloreux Pills: JONES'S, 149, Chapel-street, Salford.
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*Boot and Shoe Warehouse: C. ROLLINSON, Beehive, 162, Deansgate, Manchester.

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The charges for insertion in the Directory, which are extremely moderate, may be ascertained by post, or on personal application to Messrs. J. G. KERSHAW & Co., *Sphinx* Office, 37, Oxford-street, Manchester.

NOTICE.

THE attention of Parents and others is requested to a PATENTED IMPROVEMENT in HOODS for PERAMBULATORS & INVALID CARRIAGES, which is a simple contrivance for raising or lowering the hood of such vehicles, and dispenses with the use of the strap ordinarily used. This invention may be applied at a small cost to any vehicle; is cheaper than anything which has preceded it, and is warranted for two years, the same as all Carriages sold at this establishment.

JOS. WALSH, 57a, Piccadilly, Manchester.

VELOCIPEDES constructed on the best principle, usually charged £10, selling at £7. 10.

DELICIOUS EFFERVESCING SUMMER BEVERAGES can be made at home, with the

NEW PATENT GAZOGENE,

PRICE 10s.

MOTTERSHEAD & CO., 1, MARKET PLACE.
(Wholesale and Retail.)

BUTTER! BUTTER! BUTTER!

McCANEY & CO.,

17, JAMES-ST., SMITHFIELD MARKET,
And 205, CITY ROAD, offer the best

NEW GRASS IRISH BUTTER

At 10d., 11d., and 1s. per lb.

EGGS and POULTRY of the freshest and choicest description, at prices much cheaper than any other house in Manchester. Wholesale and retail customers meet with every attention.
FRESH ARRIVALS DAILY.

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PARCELS & PACKAGES FORWARDED DAILY to ALL PARTS of ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND,
AND THE
CONTINENT OF EUROPE.

GOODS and PARCELS forwarded per Mail and other Steamers or Sailing Vessels to India, China, Australia, United States, Canada, and all other parts of the World.

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Ironmongers and Gas Fitters,

IN ALL THEIR BRANCHES,

Owing to the great increase of their business, have taken the large and extensive Premises,

160, 162, and 164,

STRETFORD ROAD,

lately occupied by JOHN VERTEGANS and Co., Ironmongers (Limited), where will be found a large and well selected STOCK, at the Lowest Prices for Cash.

☞ Price Lists on application.

All kinds of Repairs promptly attended to.

VELOCIPEDES of the best construction and workmanship, at JOSEPH HALEY'S, Machinist, 10, Corporation-st., Ducie Bridge, Manchester.

GARDEN HOSE, with BRASS WORK.
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H. STATHAM & CO., 11, Corporation-street.

FLEXIBLE HOSE for GARDENS fitted with Taps, Jets, Roses, Spreaders, and Unions.
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THE INDIA-RUBBER SPONGES and INDIA-RUBBER CORKS have only to be seen and tried to be appreciated and adopted.
H. STATHAM & CO., 11, Corporation-street.

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS

DIARRHŒA AND BOWEL COMPLAINTS.—These maladies are ever present, and, if left unattended, frequently terminate fatally. It should be everywhere known that both cholera and diarrhœa originate in the presence of some undigested substance in the stomach or bowels, or some deleterious matter in the blood, and that Holloway's Pills can expel either with ease and expedition. They concentrate in a surprising degree purifying, alterative, regulating, and strengthening qualities, and thus exert over every internal organ the wholesomely controlling influence so necessary for subduing excessive action in the human frame. Holloway's medicine may be advantageously taken as a means of keeping the blood pure and the body cool—the only practicable plan of maintaining health in youth, manhood, and old age.

Patronised by HER MAJESTY
and their Royal Highnesses
PRINCE & PRINCESS of Wales.

NICOLL'S

TRICHANOPHRON

Removes the scurf and all impurities from the skin, Strengthens Weak Hair, prevents its turning Grey, and and by daily application restores Grey Hair to its original colour, imparting to it a beautiful, clean, glossy appearance.—Sold in bottles, 2s. 6d.

HAIR RESTORED & BALDNESS PREVENTED
BY
NICOLL'S
ELECTRIC HAIR REGENERATOR.

One application prevents the hair from falling off, and by its use the short weak hair on the head, apparently bald, commences to grow with a vigour and rapidity truly astonishing. Its action on the hair through the medium of the skin removes all scurf and dandriff, and in many cases causes grey hair to turn to the original colour by removing obstructions at the root, causing the colouring or pigment to flow into the interior of the hair; one trial is sufficient to convince the most sceptical of its efficacy.—Sold in bottles, 2s. 6d.

PREPARED BY
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NICOLL'S
GOLDEN TINCTURE,
For giving a brilliant Golden Shade to Hair of any color. Sold in bottles, 3s. 6d.

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CELEBRATED DEPILATORY,
For Removing Superfluous Hair. Sent to any part of the Three Kingdoms, carriage free, on receipt of 20 Stamps.

NICOLL'S
CELEBRATED SYRIAN LIQUID HAIR DYE.

Free from Smell. Warranted not to stain the skin. The Hair Dyed in One Minute.—In cases, 3s. 6d.

Post Office Orders payable at Vigo Street.

Hair Cutter to H.R.H. Prince of Wales.

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AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS,
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(For several years Manager to the late firm of Scholes & Co.)

Window Blind Manufacturer

5, JOHN DALTON STREET,
MANCHESTER.

Sun-Shades of every description made to order.

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COACH-BUILDER, CONGLETON,

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Exhibited his celebrated Novelty, which forms Five distinct Carriages, viz.: as Vis-a-vis, to drive from the inside. Ditto for Coachman. Ditto Close Carriage, with or without Driving Seat. Ditto Barouche Head.

The only maker in England. 4 shapes £150. 5 shapes £180.

ALSO HIS

ELECT, OR LADIES' DOG CART,

Hung low, and easy of access, suitable for Cob or Horse.—**Price £35 to £40,** according to finish.

R. WALMSLEY, JEWELLER AND SILVERSMITH, Manufacturer of LEVER & CHRONOMETER WATCHES, 129, Oldham-st., Manchester.

THE "MAIN" PRINTING OFFICES.

J. G. KERSHAW & CO.

LITHOGRAPHERS AND LETTERPRESS PRINTERS,

BY STEAM POWER,

Patent Ledger and Account Book Manufacturers,

37, OXFORD STREET, PORTLAND STREET,

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DRAWINGS OF MACHINERY, MAPS, PLANS OF ESTATES, &c.

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Plain & Ornamental Tickets

FOR SHIPPERS AND THE HOME TRADE.

ALL THE MOST USEFUL SIZES OF STAR AND PATTERN TICKETS KEPT IN STOCK.

General Commercial Lithographic Printing of every description, by their Patent Anglo-French Steam Machine.

PATTERN BOOKS

AND SHEETS FOR MUSLIN AND CALICO PRINTERS.

Every branch of the Printing and Stationery Trade executed on the Premises.

PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS OF "THE SPHINX,"

ISSUED EVERY SATURDAY.—PRICE ONE PENNY.

G. R. Allinson, General Manchester Warehouse) Families supplied. Any length cut from the piece at Wholesale Prices. (54 & 54a, High-

HOLIDAY NOTES.

ALTON TOWERS.

It was in a hap-hazard search for recreation, and without much reflection, that we elected to pay a holiday visit to Alton Towers. Friends who had visited the place described it in the usual graphic and comprehensive terms as being "very fine," and well worth seeing. In addition to this, we had in our own mind a dim vision of palatial splendour, of fairy-like gardens, combined with that peculiar attractive charm which, to eyes accustomed to tall chimneys, is always associated with the word "towers." Otherwise, it must be confessed, we had but a hazy notion of what we were going forth to see; and whether the towers were of the construction of yesterday, or venerable with the rime of age, we had not the least idea. Of course, the proper thing to have done under the circumstances would have been to expend a penny in a guide book, but we have a deeply-rooted dislike to all guides, both book and biped, preferring to find out interesting things for ourselves, and so did not provide ourselves with one. How we fared in consequence will appear in its due place; but this we may say here, that we learnt anew what we had learnt before, namely, that to one who seeks more in his or her holiday rambles than is found satisfactory to a crowd which goes gaping after novelties, there is often in show places of this kind as much of disappointment as pleasure.

That sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, who in 1814 laid the foundation of this noble pile, which is known as Alton Towers, and who converted the warren arround it into stately woods and pleasant gardens, had certainly an architectural hobby, which ran in the direction of castellated and towered gothic. As soon as you arrive at the little station of Alton, or as it used to be called Alveton, you know that you are in a place of towers. The line runs through a romantic little gorge, thickly wooded, with the river Churnet flowing past. From this gorge there rises a stone tower with an embattled top, blackened not with the smoke of battle, but with the consumption of coal, or some manufactory, of which it is the picturesquely-formed chimney. More towers there are, but of an honester sort, on a cliff some eighty yards above the river, on the right hand. These, though somewhat modernised, represent the ancient castle, built in 1176; and inhabited by Bertram de Verdon, the founder of Croxden Abbey. This castle, the ancient home of the Talbots, came to them in marriage from the Verdons, through the Furnivals. The little village clusters on the bank of the stream, and round the old keep. Turning to the left from the station, we come immediately upon the entrance gate of the grounds, which surround the new towered residence. The Earl's liveried servants are there to inspect our railway ticket, which admits us. We pass through, and find ourselves on a broad carriage way, which winds round a hill-side clothed with thick woods. High up, in the woods, we descry another square tower, painfully new, with an outlook from the top of it. Walking on for some distance through the pleasant woodland, gradually ascending to higher ground as we go, we come almost suddenly upon an open space, where the towered walls of the mansion rise from smooth-shaved velvet lawns which slope down, tree dotted, to pleasant pools of water, whose shores are fringed by deep and shady woods.

Looking upon this varied pile of gothic beauty, we are instinctively reminded of Tennyson's "Palace of Art," to which there may be more than a superficial resemblance. The place is magnificent in its dimensions; but it is impossible to look upon it without being painfully impressed with the bad taste that in this 19th century, has caused to be erected a feudal castle which, however perfect in an architectural way, is, as far as any real purpose in its construction is concerned, neither more nor less than a huge sham. Here are signs of strength and defence where none are needed; a fosse innocent of water, and in which the grass grows; a guarded court-yard; a draw-bridge, and massive loop-hooled towers; all suggestive of nothing, but the absurdity which placed them here. Ideas of beauty are as much in the mind as the object, and it depends upon what the ideas are associated with how much we enjoy the objects upon which we look. A time-stained, grim old castle, is regarded with interest, not unmixed with reverence, when we show that it has stood the brunt of battle—serving its purpose in its time—and that life and death have faced each other upon its walls. But an attempt in these times to revive old things from which the purpose and spirit are gone is, as an idle folly, and as a matter of taste, contemptible. Looked at from a purely architectural point of view, however, and as a matter of effect, there is much of real beauty in its towered pile; though it is extravagantly manifested, and composed of various styles. There is the beauty of line and curve in arch and oriel; and frost-like pinnacle. Entering the court-yard, through an archway carved with the arms of the Talbots, we reach the entrance to the main hall. We were not allowed to enter, but through the open-barred door we got a glimpse of the interior. It is of great length, and had once its lofty massive walls hung round with armour, which must have lightened its effect considerably. A noble hall it is, though, like the rest of the building, devoid of the real interest which should be associated with such places. The vaulted roof has never echoed the mailed tread of armed knights

> Who carved at the meal with gloves of steel,
> And drank the red wine through the helmet barred.

Like the other parts of the building, it is comparatively unfurnished. That lengthened lawsuit which was to determine the rightful successor to the late earl brought along with it a dispersion of the interior contents. The chapel, containing stained windows by Willement, and a screen by Pugin, was hung with pictures by the ancient masters. The Raphaels, Da Vincis, Bartolomeos, are all gone, and with them the antique furniture and the relics of Queen Catherine in the Arragon room. Leaving the building we return to the gardens, which are very picturesquely laid out upon the high ground, commanding views of wood and dell. It is pleasant to walk along the flowered and terraced height, to wander through the conservatories, rich in tropical plants and gorgeous creepers. For these natural beauties, heightened by art, one cannot but feel thankful to that earl whose statue is placed in their midst, and who may truly have been said to have "made the desert smile." But we cannot honestly express our admiration for that Chinese pagoda, flaming with gold and hung round with bells, which rises from the valley below, and out of whose gilded summit there shoots a stream of water, which falls around it in brilliant spray. The barbarous splendour of this specimen of Chinese art scarcely harmonises with the gothic towers. Another golden railed and galleried temple, in a similar style, commands a grand view of the gardens.

Passing from the cultivated beauty we proceed along the rock-walk, a path which leads through the woods, beneath terrible cliffs, whose overhanging masses look threateningly destructive. The majority of sight-seeing excursionists confine themselves to the home garden, so we find ourselves in comparative solitude. These woods are among the finest things about the place, solemn in their depth of shade, and luxuriant in their leafy undergrowth. Tall foxglove spires rise in clusters from the tangled green of fern and bramble, reaching often to the height of six feet. There are beautiful effects of light and shade and colour wherever we choose to look for them, and a holy cathedral-like solemnity and stillness where the fir trees send up their smooth boles and almost obscure the blue of the sky overhead with their feathery branches. You may walk for miles in the woods, which stretch their long-drawn aisles on all sides of the towered house.

Having wandered sufficiently we return by a lower walk than the rock-path, pass the Chinese pagoda, listen for a while to a rustic band which has come hither to discourse music to visitors, and then, feeling the need of refreshment, seek the place where such is provided. We find it not far distant from the rear of the hall, and of a character rather surprising to us. In front of the building (which is marked "first and second class") there is a new dancing board, screened off with unpainted deal. Upon this is an orchestra consisting of a harp, a lute, and a concertina. By the aid of such sounds as these can evoke, country lads and lasses are footing it on the new timber.

Leaving this gay and festive scene of music, dancing, and feasting, we pass again through the courtyard of the hall, and make our way to

the railway station. Here are trains from Derby, Nottingham, and Leicester, filling with homeward-bound excursionists. We are a little too soon for ours, so linger on the bridge awhile, then climb the heights to the castle, see the old church with its square grey tower, and beside it a monastic residence, dedicated to St. John, now a sort of nunnery, in the gardens of which a pale and hooded nun is tending and watering flowers, while inside, past the open windows, another flits like a dream.

SWIMMING RACES AT THE MAYFIELD BATH.

ADVERTISEMENTS in the papers and on the hoardings of the city have so often propounded the query, "Can you swim?" and have answered it either affirmatively or negatively with such confidence that few people in the locality can be altogether in ignorance of the existence in Manchester of those who feel some sort of interest in swimming. Still, though there are at least four places of public resort for swimming purposes, not many persons, besides those actually learning or practising the accomplishment, know much of their whereabouts. With the exception of the Baths in Leaf Street, Stretford Road, these establishments are so unfortunately situated that one might spend a life-time in Manchester without discovering them, and without knowing from practical observation anything about them. For instance, we can imagine many a reader of the Manchester Swimming Club's announcements asking "Where is Mayfield?" and beyond the vague answer that it is where the celebrated Hoyle's prints are prepared for the markets of the world, the questioner would obtain little or no information. It may, therefore, be as well to state that Mayfield is a district lying to the left of London Road as you go from Piccadilly towards Ardwick Green, and is not far from the London Road Station. Indeed, the tower of the Mayfield Baths and the Mayfield Printworks may be distinctly seen from the railway immediately after leaving the station. Mills, dyeworks, and factories of all kinds lie round about; the dwelling-houses are of the humblest description; and no feature of the whole neighbourhood suggests, in the remotest degree, any idea associated with May or with fields.

The Mayfield swimming bath is sixty-three feet long, at one end six feet deep, at the other three, so that the incline is very gradual. The bottom of the bath is flagged, and round the place are series of closets, for the arrangemet of the bathers' toilets. Around a balcony above are small private bath rooms. At each end of the bath, raised a little from the floor, is a plank, from which the bathers are supposed to dive. Such is the ordinary appearance presented by the place; but this being what an announcement called a "swimming gala," some special preparations had been made. Ordinary bathers had been for the time excluded. The walls were elaborately bedecked with flags, the starting board had been covered with red cloth, and round the side of the bath forms, also clothed in red, had been placed for the convenience of spectators. Bathers accustomed to sea or river must contemplate with something like horror the idea of swimming by night. Indeed, swimming by gas-light does seem a little abnormal, and the inky shade which is thereby given to the water is, to imaginative people, rather suggestive of melancholy and suicide than of a pleasant and healthful recreation. Of course, it would be difficult to arrange the races for any other time than night, and, as the water is made tepid on all occasions, little or no practical inconvenience is experienced.

The tickets and programmes had so carefully assured us that proceedings would begin at eight o'clock prompt, that we felt a strong—and as it proved a well founded-suspicion—that punctuality would not be observed. At eight o'clock, there was only a small attendance of spectators, whose numbers, however, gradually increased until all the seats were moderately filled. Once upon a time, if our memory does not deceive us, there was a notice to the effect that smoking in the room was not allowed. If such a rule ever existed, it must either have been suspended for the night, or have fallen into disuse, for four-fifths of the on-lookers had pipes or cigars. The arrangements for the benefit of ignorant spectators were very intelligible. The start was from the deep end of the bath, and as each competitor went on the plunge-board his name was called out, and at the end of the race the judge repeated the names of the first, and if necessary, of the second. Mr. E. B. Mather, who looks very youthful to have lived long enough to have attained and yielded up such a position as Champion of England, was judge and referee, and beyond betraying symptoms of an occasional nervous doubt as to the precise number of lengths traversed, he was evidently quite at home in his position. There were five separate swimming contests, and a diving match on the programme. The distances varied from four to twelve lengths of the bath, and when necessary the races were decided in heats. Before proceeding to describe the races, we will correct the considerable misapprehension which we are persuaded exists amongst outsiders, as to the sort of swimming now in vogue. The popular notion as to what swimming is, has for its mainstay some sort of impression of breasting the water. This is precisely what the modern swimmer carefully avoids. Except for a change and a temporary rest, the swimmer never gets on to his breast at all. Robbing the description of technical words and phrases, the swimming is done all on the side, and for most of the stroke the greater part of the head and face is completely immersed. This fashion has been found to give a possibility of attaining greater speed, but what is gained in efficiency is certainly lost in beauty. There is something powerful and graceful in the old manner of swimming. But the constant sputtering and spitting out of water during the brief interval in which the mouth of the swimmer appears above water, and opening widely gasps for air, make swimming, as now practised, anything but pretty. The opening of the mouth reminds us forcibly of the action of that of an expiring fish, as it lies hopelessly on the greensward; whilst in some cases the noise and splash produced by constant rolling and gasping, could only have been surpassed by the exertions of an insane porpoise.

The first race was not particularly exciting, as only one competitor out of the four put in an appearance. The next event was for swimmers of the second class, over six lengths of the bath. In the first heat three gentlemen came forward. "I start you," said Mr. Mather, "with one, two, three, and off; and you must be careful to touch each end of the bath, or you will be disqualified. Are you ready? One—" Whereupon Mr. Whitworth, whether from nervousness or over-hurry, to the immense amusement of everybody, fell in. The next attempt was more successful, and the three swimmers dashed into the water with a tremendous plunge, which scattered the water to the right and left, and produced the effect of a heavy shower of rain on the clothes of spectators around them. Mr. Whitworth revenged himself by winning the first and also the final heat, and the first prize, a silver medal. The second place was exceedingly well fought for. Mr. Hetherington and Mr. Williams coming in so close together that the result was decided to be a tie. On a deciding contest, Mr. Hetherington won the bronze medal. The two heats of the amateurs' open race were won by Mr. J. Dunlop and Mr. Arkyll, the latter winning his place after a very hard fight with Mr. E. Pierrepont, which would have been still closer if the latter had not misunderstood the directions of the judge and stopped at the wrong time. Finally, Mr. Dunlop—not, we understood, a member of the club—won the silver medal. In the most important contest of the evening, for the captaincy of the swimming club and a gold medal, three gentlemen started; but one soon gave up, and the struggle was confined to Messrs. E. and C. Pierrepont. Mr. E. Pierrepont is the stronger swimmer, and won with something like ease, though the manner in which his competitor rises out of the water at each stroke gives an appearance of great buoyancy to his swimming. The last race, a handicap, in which some of the swimmers received a certain number of seconds' start, was won by Mr. Smith. There was also a match, won by Mr. C. D. Lennon, for the "neatest and cleanest dive," in which most of the splashing before spoken of was done away with. Some of the competitors must have been vastly pleased that the end had come, for shaking limbs and chattering teeth had begun to tell that an hour and a half was too long a time to spend in a state of undress. Two little boys, one of whom was exceedingly anxious to show us that he could swim four lengths of the bath in his clothes, and both of whom were laudably wishful to make a display of their powers, were also not sorry that all was over.

It would not be fair to omit altogether the mention of the extraordinary feats in the water gone through by Professor Poulton. As the feats were enumerated, and we heard that the "Professor" would swim with his hands and feet tied, would swim like a top in the water, would stand on his head and would eat, drink, and smoke under water, our strong impression was that at best such things could only be done in

what is termed "a flukey fashion." When we saw each seemingly impossible trick done thoroughly and with complete fairness, we heartily agreed with Mr. Mather in his admiration for the Professor, and were quite willing to believe that he is second to none in the ornamental branch of the art of natation.

THE WESLEYAN COLLEGE AT DIDSBURY.

THE Wesleyan Theological Institution at Didsbury is one of three colleges established and supported by the Methodist people for the education of their clergy. The sister institutions are at Richmond, Surrey, and Headingley, near Leeds.

John Wesley, at a very early period in the history of Methodism, contemplated the founding of a Theological college. At the first conference, held in London, in 1744, this was a subject of conversation. The question was then asked, "Can we have a seminary for labourers?" and the recorded answer is, "If God spare us till another conference." In 1745 the subject was resumed: "Can we have a seminary for labourers yet?" and the answer is, "Not till God gives us a proper Tutor." It is evident, then, that an institution for the education of ministers was resolved upon, but delayed by circumstances. Nor does it appear that Wesley ever abandoned his design. Not being able to accomplish it according to his first intentions, he tried to approach to it as nearly as possible. Having established Kingswood School for the education of the sons of "travelling preachers," he endeavoured to make it in some respects subsidiary to this object, and, for a time, sent several of his most promising preachers to study in that academy, which was of considerable advantage to Methodism, as in the case of the learned Dr. Adam Clarke, who was an *alumnus* of Kingswood.

The great majority of John Wesley's preachers, though men of good sense, sterling piety, and abundant labours, were comparatively uneducated, and had little or no appreciation for literature, notwithstanding the character and example of their leader, who was a most learned and scholarly man. One of them, John Pawson, in looking over Wesley's library in the City Road Chapel-house, London, found a folio edition of Shakespere, very fully annotated by John Wesley. Pawson, in the spirit of the Kaliph Omar, burned it! The people, like many of their pastors, were, in those times, not very careful for the advantages of education; hence it was not until 1823 that a committee of eminent ministers took the matter up, and prepared an elaborate report on the subject; and in 1833 another committee finally arranged a plan for "the better education of junior preachers," which plan was adopted by the conference of 1834. Premises were procured in London, suitable tutors engaged, and the Theological Institution made a good start. The arrangements in London were, however, soon found inadequate to the necessities of the case, and in 1839, when the Methodists raised £200,000 in celebration of their centenary, some £30,000 were devoted to the purchase of premises at Richmond, Surrey, and at Didsbury. The third college, at Headingley, is of very recent erection.

Notwithstanding the incalculable advantages of these colleges, the Methodist laity have not supported them very enthusiastically. There has been, on the part of the large and very useful body of lay or "local" preachers, considerable jealousy of their "student" brethren. And this is especially the case in or near large towns, where "students" are generally, because of their superior education, preferred to the "local brethren." Of course, the student, in every case, comes from the ranks of the "local preachers," in order to qualify for the regular ministry; and perhaps it is not unnatural that some of these latter should be a little jealous, when one of themselves, because he is a student, is preferred by the congregations in general to minister to them. Thus it is, that the "local preacher" influence, which in some classes of Wesleyan society is very great, has been exerted in a manner unfavorable to the success of the Wesleyan colleges. There is also a very stupid opinion among some of the Methodists that education spoils a preacher. They may often be heard to argue that because our Lord never sent his disciples to college, and they succeeded so admirably without collegiate training, *therefore*, it is a waste of money, an injury to men's souls, and a drawback to their usefulness, to attempt to educate them for the christian ministry. Unfortunately then, these colleges have always been a matter of some pecuniary difficulty to the Wesleyan authorities, and had it not been for the earnest and self-denying efforts of the ministers themselves in supplementing the deficiencies of the laity, these valuable institutions could not have been supported. We are happy, however, to know that they are yearly increasing in public favor, and will, of course, secure more hearty and liberal help.

The students in these colleges come from various classes of the Methodist people. A considerable number are the sons of Wesleyan ministers, who have had the advantage of the very supecior education given at the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove schools, which are set apart for the training of ministers' sons. These take first rank, and after three years at one of the three colleges, turn out good scholars, and often very good preachers. Next come, though few in number, the sons of the upper ranks of Wesleyan society, who also have had a good education, and become successful preachers. Next come, and in large numbers, the sons of the trading classes, who may have had a tolerable commercial education, with perhaps a smattering of Latin and French, but with no knowledge of Greek or Hebrew. Then, lastly, come a few from the operative ranks, knowing nothing beyond "the three r's," and not too much of them, but often men of genius and power. The rule is that *all* students shall stay three years at college. This, in the case of the first and second classes above mentioned, is unobjectionable; but in the case of the others, the time is sadly inadequate to give them more than that "little learning" which is often, with such men, a "dangerous thing." All have to attempt Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and what can a man, fresh from the "counter," the "last," or the plough-tail" do in three years at these three languages, considering too that he must also study English, Mathematics, Mental and Moral philosophy. Why he becomes a smatterer: how can he help it? It is very painful to hear some of these young men reading such chapters in the New Testament as Romans 16th, where they meet with "proper names," which, from the want of a scholarly acquaintance with the Greek Testament, they cannot pronounce. And be it remembered that many of these men are good preachers, and occupy some pulpit or other every Sunday, to the edification of many people. We are bold to say that the Methodists do justice neither to these young men nor to themselves in giving them any less than a six years' training at one of their colleges.

The Didsbury Institution is a capacious and not unhandsome building, on the left side of the road, near the village. It is capable of accommodating eighty students. It has a chapel, gymnasium, and cricket ground. The two latter very suitable appendages to an educational establishment were conceded to the students only after a severe struggle; for several of the institution committee held, and still hold, that any approach to "muscular Christianity" which involves more than good "walking exercise" is of diabolical invention. We are, however, assured that, as might be expected, the gymnasium and cricket field have very much benefitted the students.

There is a staff of competent managers and professors. The Rev. W. Jackson holds the governorship of the establishment. He is a gentleman of pleasing address, paternal and encouraging in his manner, yet an efficient disciplinarian and a wise counsellor. In cases of difficulty between himself and his charge, he is allowed a small committee to assist him with its advice, and so divide the responsibility.

The present Divinity tutor is the Rev. W. B. Pope, who succeeded to the late Dr. Hannah, a gentleman eminent as a Scholar and a Divine, and greatly beloved as a man. Mr. Pope is not an unworthy successor to Dr. Hannah. He is an accomplished Theologian and a fair classic, and has been very much before the public as a translator of some of the great German Hermeneutists, whose works have been introduced to English readers by Clark, of Edinburgh. Mr. Pope has also pubiished a volume of *Discourses on the Kingdom and Reign of Christ*, which are among the finest sermons of our day. He is a teacher of great sympathetic power, and is highly esteemed by the students, as indeed he deserves to be.

The senior classical tutor is the Rev. John D. Geden, a man of varied attainments, well furnished for his position, but whose delicate health, as we are informed, interferes not inconsiderably with his efficiency. Mr. Geden is a preacher of very high mark.

The assistant-tutor is the Rev. G. Oyston, B.A. (Lond.), a good scholar, and a hard-working tutor, whose duties are very onerous, as it

is his peculiarity to initiate the less educated candidates into the mysteries of grammar and elementary knowledge of all sorts. The students are, in general, a credit to their tutors. Some of them turn out good scholars, and have their names in good places in the London University Kalendars; many are good pastors and preachers, and will be found in the front rank with the foremost religious teachers of the day.

Each student, if able, contributes towards his board and education at these colleges; and if unable, he receives his board and instruction gratuitously, in which case he pledges himself to reimburse the institution if he should hereafter join another Christian community. It happens not infrequently that some of these young men find the vagrant life of an "itinerant preacher" very little to their taste, and then, almost invariably, they seek admission into the ministry of the Church of England, where, if their characters are good, and their scholarship up to the mark, they are generally welcomed, especially by the Evangelical section of the English Church.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

THE FINE ARTS IN MANCHESTER.

MR. Disraeli has lately been taking occasion to commend the public spirit of this city. Doubtless, many persons will consider that praise from Mr. Disraeli is praise from Sir Hubert Stanley with a vengeance. Perhaps it is; and praise is rendered much more pleasant by its emanation from Sir Hubert Stanley than from Mrs. Grundy. But neither Sir Hubert Stanley nor anybody or anything else can render it so palatable as the consciousness of having deserved it. We fear this supreme gratification is denied us. The particular instance which provoked the eulogy certainly has every appearance of meriting it; but the manner in which the fine arts usually conduct themselves in Manchester is too notorious to be counterbalanced by a single exception to the rule. Fine art in this neighbourhood has got to be pretty well synonymous with fine cheek; and the poor new Town Hall bids fair to be the artistic dustbin of the community. It is becoming the regular recipient of fine art gifts, the sole object of which is the glorification of the givers, and the general result their stultification. How the proposed statue of Oliver Cromwell will emerge out of the cloud of mystery in which it is enveloped, time will show; or possibly time will not show, as it is probable enough it may never be turned out at all. As things stand at present, they look very much as if another striking instance of fine art jobbery is to be added to the catalogue. It is just possible that the affair may turn out simple and straightforward—another example of public spirit, in fact; but matters wear an appearance of ingenuity and stratagem, and Mr. Alderman Heywood seems to be connected with them.

THE INVASION OF BLACKPOOL.

Invasion is the only word for the "ugly rush" to which Blackpool has been subjected. On the Friday of last week the railway company, we are told, poured twelve thousand people into the place. On Saturday, the arrivals were still more numerous, reaching, we should imagine, at least twenty thousand. Blackpool is used to invasions,—indeed, is rather partial to them—but it fairly staggered under the invasion of Saturday last. Prices of fish, flesh, and other edibles, rose ominously; beds were unobtainable; and but for the transformation of the first-class carriages at the railway station into sleeping apartments, hundreds would have been shelterless that night. All Sunday, the beach, the piers, the promenade, swarmed with people. A faint idea of the scenes of the day may be gathered from the fact that, at one time during the evening, no fewer than five thousand persons were on the old pier—literally covering it from end to end with a dense, ever-moving, yet almost impassable multitude. Yet "to one in populous city pent," Blackpool offers no mental rest, no quiet, and—one feature excepted—little novelty. It is towny, and noisy, and crowded; the faces one sees are the familiar faces of Market Street, of Rochdale, or Bury, or Oldham; the irrepressible penny daily paper is there; so are bustle, and turmoil, and shopping,—just the same as at home, but in an intensified degree. The one exceptional and potent attraction is, of course, the sea—finer here and frequently grander than at any other point of the Lancashire coast; and with the sea, an atmosphere of unrivalled power and purity. Remembering, therefore, that the toiling town folk of Lancashire can here get more health for their money in a shorter space of time than anywhere else in England, we cease to wonder at the growing fascination of Blackpool.

THE THEATRES.

The Haymarket Company make their last appearance this evening. During the latter portion of their visit some of the objectionable old farces have been revived, and been highly relished by a large part of the audiences. For the next season at the Haymarket, Mr. Buckstone announces the play advertised to be performed on the occasion of his benefit last night. It is by Mr. Tom Taylor—one of the old, old set! At the Prince's, *Joan of Arc*—withdrawn after an inglorious career of six nights—has been succeeded by the *Gnome King*, another but less objectionable extravaganza. We cannot help being sorry that the management should have inaugurated their magnificently re-decorated house with such indifferent success, but we cannot help being glad that another example has been given of the unpopularity of burlesque in Manchester. Doubtless, too, the Haymarket Company have been formidable rivals; and although they will not be so more than one night longer, they are to be succeeded by an attraction which is certain to be considerable, and ought to be great. Mr. Fechter is announced, at the Royal, in *Ruy Blas*—an actor and a part which are both highly eulogised by Mr. Charles Dickens in the current number of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

A WARNING TO YOUNG LADIES.

A new law has just come into effect which bears an influence upon the marriage-market, and so possesses an interest for young ladies—that is, all unmarried ladies—all unmarried ladies being young, by the nature of the case. Let it be known that for the future every lady who contemplates raising a little money on her blighted affections must make up her mind to a display of her attractions in the witness-box, and to the comfortable ordeal of little sociable conversation with the counsel for the other side. If it is remembered that great liberties are allowed to barristers, when cross-examining, and that those gentlemen generally avail themselves pretty freely of their privileges, the thought may deter some of those sweet creatures who thiuk they ought to have a monopoly of jilting, from rushing into the protecting arms of law. A few polite interrogatories as to the state of their account with their chemist, the construction of their back-hair, the number of times they have been engaged, the length of their acquaintance with the beloved objects, and the time it usually takes their broken hearts to get mended, might have the effect of alienating a little the sympathies of juries. A *subpœna duces tecum* (order that you bring with you) all chignons, cosmetics, and other articles of toilet, and a few of these inconsidered trifles being put in evidence, might further reduce damages. A plaintiff, at the present Liverpool assizes, was put into the box. We wonder how she liked it.

PASSENGER JAM.

Doesn't City Road sport a policeman? If it does, let us call the attention of that functionary to the Stretford omnibuses which roll past his nose on Saturday afternoons. We have experienced disgraceful over-crowding on many routes—especially the long ones—but never anything to equal what we witnessed on this route the other Saturday. It was a howling abomination. The Stretford Omnibus Company had better attach hydraulic presses to their conveyances at once. But is it the Stretford Omnibus Company? Is it not their guards, who pack the roof, as well as the side and front seats with passengers, who allow a line of folks to stand inside, who let men cluster on the steps like bees, and yet look out for more? Do the Stretford Omnibus Company, whose 'buses are overstrained, and whose horses are overtaxed, ever handle the pecuniary results? Do the guards turn up money for at least two loads of passengers on every journey out on Saturday afternoons? If not, let the Company look to it; and if the Company don't look to it, would some kindly-disposed policeman generously find a little leisure to condescend to enter a mild protest with the guards against a systematic violation of the law, before the very eyes of those who are supposed to be its enforcers, but who are in reality connivers at the defiance of it.

A LITERARY SNOB.

Critics are never wanting who will abjectly prostrate their judgment before the Juggernaut of Shakespere's genius, but we were not prepared for so pitiable a piece of flunkyism as that perpetrated in a recent paragraph in the *Guardian* which talked about "*inferior* comedies *because not Shakespere's.*" Was ever such a dramatic critic as this—even in London? True, we have read of such literary snobs; but we always regarded them as artistical exaggerations. Alas, who shall exaggerate the folly of man? We know the greater part of the admirers of Shakespere's works have no other reason for admiring them than that they are Shakespere's; but we never met with so ingenuous a confession of the fact. Fools do exist, but do not often wear their foolishness upon their sleeve. The fool who has not wit enough to hide his folly, is a fool indeed. "Inferior, because not Shakespere!" And yet, we warrant, this man thinks that he appreciates the great bard. What a world we live in? What encouragement is there to merit, when one of the consequences of being the greatest hero of history is the admiration of such persons as this? "Inferior, because not Shakespere!" Oh, let this fellow sell his body to the Infirmary; that when he is dead, his head may be opened, and his brains may be weighed! Yet he is not altogether a fool. Though he is not wise enough to give no reason at all for considering the *School for Scandal* inferior to *Twelfth Night*, he has enough sense to give a semblance of a reason instead of a real one. That were a much harder task: for as a clown is to a wit, as a sketch is to a picture, as glass is to a diamond, as 'prentice-work is to a masterpiece—so is *Twelfth Night* to the *School for Scandal*. In plot, in character, in wit, in humour, in situation, the *School for Scandal* is superior to *Twelfth Night;* and yet a "critic"—language forgive us!—is foolhardy enough to say it is "inferior, because not Shakespere." It is superior, because it is richer in all the good qualities of drama; yet it is inferior because it has not been composed by Shakespere! Did ever man write himself down so egregious an ass?

MANCHESTER *v.* BROUGHTON.

No local match could have been more interesting than that played last Friday and Saturday, at Old Trafford, by the Manchester against the Broughton cricket clubs. The sides were exceedingly well matched, and together comprised a large number of county celebrities, each eleven including several distinguished players. The Manchester had as bowlers Mr. Appleby, in whose praise we have more than once spoken, and Allen Hill, the ground bowler, who has not yet had an opportunity of making a reputation as a county player. For the Broughton, the bowling was done by Hickton, who is sufficiently well-known as a county bowler, and Mr. Payne, whose "slows" were extraordinary successful, as they have often been before in matches even more important. Amongst batters, the Manchester eleven included the names of Mr. E. B. Rowley (who was not so effective as usual), Mr. J. Hillkirk, and Mr. C. G. Hulton; and the Broughton, Messrs. F. W. Wright and J. Makinson. The first innings left the Manchester six runs ahead. Their second innings gave a wonderful proof of the uncertainty of cricket, and of the impossibility of predicting at one period of the game its final result. The first wicket fell for nine; then Messrs. Hillkirk and Hulton (the batting of the latter gentleman was perfectly tremendous in its fierceness, after an ineffectual appeal to his captain to be allowed to resign), made runs rapidly, and when the second wicket fell for 115, almost certain promise was given of a large score. Yet the total reached for ten wickets was only 154. The fielding of the Broughton during this innings was, with a slight exception or two, close and well sustained, and would not have disgraced any county eleven. The match was exceedingly well contested as far as it went, and promised to be exciting, and it is much to be regretted that time did not allow it to be finished. This inability to finish was not owing in any degree to the heavy scores made, but altogether to an absurd want of punctuality in beginning play. On both days it was long after the proper hour when play began, though the advertised time was not outrageously early. The game thus ended in a draw, and each side will nurse to the end of time a profound conviction that it must have won.

A COI(G)N OF VANTAGE.—A Sovereign.

OUR SOCIAL SKETCH-BOOK.

THE WRITER TO THE PAPERS.

THERE is no more interesting portion of a newspaper than the correspondents' column, provided that you don't own stocks, in which case nothing can vie in interest with the money-market intelligence. Is it not much pleasanter to hear that Jones's wife couldn't stop either of two omnibuses on their way to town, and that Jones thinks "this abominable racing should be put a stop to," than to be informed of the latest political juncture in St. Domingo, or even that the chin of a prince royal has given birth to a couple of hairs, with the supplementary news next day that it turns out to be only a mole, after all? What though a marriage has been arranged between the Honourable Mr. Suckthumdoodle and Lady Blanch Milkandwater, is it not much more gratifying to be informed by "A Young Man" that he considers a pictorial representation of certain music-hall extremities to be corrupting the morals of the community? A hundred times. Besides, the correspondents' column is a delightful study of human nature. Observe how every other writer doses the editor with complimentary boluses in the way of "valuable paper," "able article," "powerful pen," "influential circulation," all in order to increase his dubious chances of getting inserted. Remark how persons who have been attacked have always had "their attention called to a paragraph," or "an article brought to their notice," and invariably "did not see the observations till informed of them"—loth to confess themselves guilty of anything so low as the perusal of a newspaper which has been scurrilous enough to impugn their doings. Notice, also, by what a large number of persons an editor is looked upon as a sort of *Encyclopædia Britannica*, whose mission is to settle bets for them, or give them legal advice for the honour of assisting them instead of six-and-eightpence. But the most amusing feature of all is the absurd grievances, the impracticable suggestions, the endeavours to be sharp, and the overweening self-conceit of the writer to the papers. By no means do we include all correspondents in this silly category. Some are really useful, and some really witty; and there are few things more encouraging to a professional writer than to find his efforts appreciated, his opinions backed up, and his endeavours fostered by an intelligent suite of correspondents. But he seldom has that pleasure. Most correspondents, in newspapers at least, are little better than grievance-mongers afflicted with the itch of authorship. And indeed the correspondents' column affords a safety-valve to much pent-up emotion, which otherwise might do the sufferer under it a serious injury. It goes off with a loud noise, and does nobody any harm, except when it is signed with the victim's real name, in which case it sometimes makes him look ridiculous. As for the grievance, it is gone. Where is it, when the grievance-monger sees his darling lucubration invested with the glories of type? He buys a dozen copies of the paper, reads it aloud in the bosom of his family, alludes slightingly to it to every friend he happens to meet—or rather, meets on purpose—cuts it out, pastes it in the family scrap-book, and sends a copy to his brother in Australia.

Let us give one or two examples. Imprimis, the attempt to be funny. The funny correspondent has an office in town, but not having much to do in it, his unused gaspipe, after the mysterious manner of unused gaspipes, becomes full of air. Turning the tap on, a curious mixture rushes forth, extinguishes his taper, and fills his office with an undesirable odour. He at once makes up his mind. He will write to the *Grumbleton Guardian*. So he turns off the disagreeable mixture, starts off home, and sets to work composing the following letter, which he thinks is too good

not to be signed with his own name. It duly appears, signature and all:

To the Editor of the Grumbleton Guardian.

Sir,—You may not be aware of the fact, but I am not a balloon. If I were, I should probably be pleased at the gas committee's kindness in contributing to my internal economy, by guiding into my office in town a stream of vapour no doubt admirably adapted for elevating purposes of that kind, but for none so elevating as reading, writing, or arithmetic. In a word, my gas obstinately refuses to be lit. "My gas," did I say? I beg your pardon, Mr. Editor of the *Grumbleton Guardian*, and my own, for affiliating such an issue upon myself. I mean the gas-committee's gas. Seriously, Mr. Editor, considering the price we pay compared with other towns, we ought to have a much superior article; and as we are accustomed to superior articles in the *Grumbleton Guardian*, we don't like inferior ones in anything else. Our gas bills are a very serious item in our expenses in this smoky town, and since we put up with so much smoke, I think we really ought to have a little light. Or, if the committee persist in refusing us this light, let them throw a little on the subject why they cannot supply us better. If we don't grumble at paying for it, we must have the article good; and if we haven't the article good, we must grumble at paying for it. Our gas bills are enormous. I trust, sir, you will ventilate this subject; for, as you would admit, if you had been in my office when I turned the tap on, a great deal of ventilation it requires. With such a Bude light as the *Grumbleton Guardian* it is impossible for us to be entirely in the dark, but a little gas also would be acceptable to—Yours, &c.,

Walker Witling.

[From the above humorous letter, which says what has long needed saying, we should think the issue from our correspondent's burner was laughing-gas.—Ed. *Guard.* (soothed by the reference to the Bude light.)]

Mr. Walter Witling reads over his production, chuckles at the editorial note, seriously thinks of taking to literature as a profession, and sends a copy to Hookey W. Witling in Australia. The next day the following appears:

To the Editor of the Grumbleton Guardian.

Sir,—The price we pay compared with other towns for our gas is as 4 to 5. Mr. Walter Witling's last quarter's gas bill was 1s. 1¾d.—Yours, &c.,

John Drystick,
Chairman of the Gas Committee.

Mr. Walker Witling reads this; is sorry he signed his real name, blushes to have his financial matters exposed, and does *not* send a copy to Hookey Witling in Australia.

Take another instance. A correspondent has been ordered horse exercise for the benefit of his health. Now, persons who are ordered horse exercise for the benefit of their healths are generally not first-class horsemen, and this gentleman is no exception to the rule. Consequently, when his horse trod on a seven-cornered stone, instead of pulling it up with a strong rein, he tumbled off. Simultaneously with touching the earth, he was seized with a morbid desire to write to the paper—which he did:

To the Editor of the Grumbleton Guardian.

Sir,—Allow me to call the attention of the authorities, through your valuable paper, to the disgraceful state of Stony Vale. As I was riding along it last evening, my horse—a valuable hunter—stumbled over one of the many inequalities of the road, and notwithstanding the most vigorous exertions which considerable muscular strength and a presence of mind engendered by a great experience of horses enabled me to make, fell, injuring himself severely—and me. This street is the scene of many accidents, which, in the case of persons unaccustomed to riding, often prove serious. When one of the road trustees breaks his neck through the road's bad pavement and his own bad horsemanship, we shall probably have it mended. For the sake of the inhabitants of Grumbleton it is to be hoped the fated trustee will lose no time in bringing about the casualty.—Trusting you will insert this protest in your valuable paper, I am, &c.,

Equester.

Of course, the trustees never think of noticing this letter; but, perhaps, they had previously decided to repave Stony Vale, and they immediately begin to do so. They have not been at it a week when the following communication rushes into the correspondents' column of the Bude light:

To the Editor of the Grumbleton Guardian.

Sir,—I was driving to Grumbleton in my gig, after dark, last night. Turning the corner where the Rumbleton Road joins Stony Vale, my horse nearly ran into a heap of stones lying in the midst of the road, without any warning of their presence being given, except a huge glaring fire, which so alarmed my horse that, although I had by some extraordinary manipulation of the reins guided it off the stones, I could not prevent it running into a deep trench dug in the side of the road, apparently for horses to tumble into. My gig was much damaged—and my head. When the horse had done itself all the mischief it could, a clayey ruffian came out of a tent made of wheel-barrows, and added insult to injury by insinuating that I was in an unfit state to drive. I think it is abominable that the authorities should leave the roads in such a state. At any rate, let them refrain from placing vulgar artisans to insult those whom their own carelessness has hurt. It may give the public some idea of the injuries and the shock I received if I say that I vomited several times last night, and woke up this morning with a severe headache. I still feel very dull and stupid.—Apologising for trespassing on your valuable space, I am, sir, yours, &c.,

Victim.

Now, let us take an example from the "my wife" series. Surely, everybody knows this sort of a letter. It is generally written under strong domestic pressure:

To the Editor of the Grumbleton Guardian.

Sir,—My wife rode out yesterday in an omnibus from the Exchange to Old Trafford. My wife gave the conductor what my wife thought was a shilling, and he gave my wife ninepence out. But when my wife arrived at her destination, my wife found she had given the conductor a sovereign by mistake. My wife immediately went to the office, and they promised to question the guard on his up journey. In consequence of what my wife told me, I proceeded to the office at night, to recover the money, when what was my astonishment to be told that my wife must be mistaken; the guard had received no sovereign from anyone. My wife is certain she gave it to him, and I have perfect faith in my wife's assertion; yet the proprietor refuses to dismiss the conductor from his employment. Is not this conduct abominable?—I remain, sir, yours indignantly,

Benedict.

The next day appears the following:

To the Editor of the Grumbleton Guardian.

Sir,—Whilst thanking you for inserting my letter of yesterday, permit me to add that my wife has found the missing sovereign in the lining of her dress. My wife is sorry for her mistake. So am I.—Yours, &c.,

Benedict.

But what is the use of reproducing the amenities of the correspondents' column? Are they not to be found in the original in any day's issue either of our radical *Examiner*, our constitutional *Courier*, or our neutral *Guardian*? But there is a difference between the letters published in these papers. The *Examiner's* correspondents (who get printed) are for the most part serious and substantial; the *Guardian's* solemn and dull, while it every now and then electrifies one by inserting the very last thing one would have expected; the *Courier's* are numerous, garrulous, highly political, lively, foolish, and conservative-working-mannish. Supposing one had perused the celebrated Young Man's protest, before he sent it to the *Guardian*, what odds would one not have given that it would be "received," and nothing more? Who would have expected the journal, which hangs on the lips of Buckstone, to permit a young man to blush in its columns at a picture of tights? Great are the mysteries of journalism!

It is amusing to watch the correspondents' column being manipulated, sometimes by the paper, sometimes by outsiders. An individual is rash enough to write a combative letter to the editor—the editor, for some malicious reason, puts it in—perhaps, because it gives him the opportunity of appending a neat little note at the end—the correspondent suddenly turns out more able than he was supposed to be, returns a damaging reply, and dares the editor to mortal combat. Is this to be borne? Is an editor to be bearded in his own paper? Never! "This correspondence must now cease: all future letters must be paid for as advertisements." Squelched. But it is not only the editor who manipulates the correspondents' column. A little while ago there appeared in the *Guardian* a letter from one "James Collins," suggesting it would be well if some member of the council of the Botanical Gardens would lay before the public a statement of their recent difference with the Horticultural Society. To the casual reader all appeared natural and above-board, but the observant reader paused, reflected, and "smole." To us

the letter bore the appearance of a wedge. That was the thin end: the thick was to follow. We endeavoured to raise a new hat on the occurrence, by betting anyone that a communication would be officially forthcoming the next day. Our character, however, as a prophet stood too high amongst our friends for any of them to dare to accept the wager; and though we are still wearing our old hat, our prophetic reputation was vindicated by the immediate appearance of a letter from the president. Mr. Collins had happened to make the precise suggestion with which the council were anxious to comply. Singular—very—not to say remarkable.

It is a matter of wonder to us how it is there are so many people willing to spend time and trouble in writing letters to the papers. True, appearance in the correspondents' column is invested to some small extent with the glamour of authorship, and ambition to appear in print is one of the weaknesses which flesh is heir to; but the chances against insertion are so many—editors, who can insert whatever rubbish of their own they choose, give so little thought to the numerous budding hopes they blight by their copious consignments to the W. P. B.—that it is a matter of marvel how folks can pump up sufficient interest to write what they do not know will ever be read. If the correspondents' column did not consist so much of grumbling, it would be a very satisfactory evidence of the interest taken by many individuals in the welfare of their kind; but alas, grumbling seems to be its main object: it forces the cynic back into his cynicism. Nevertheless, much of it is justifiable. The topic which we first alluded to, for instance, is a legitimate subject for a grumble—omnibus-racing; but look here. Suppose the omnibus proprietor, in consequence of Jones's letter, ceases to chase the opposition. This 'bus, which has carried Jones for ten years, is passed by the opposition 'bus, which hasn't been running for ten days. Who is the first man to get on the foremost 'bus? Why, Jones. And so the world wags.

Very amusing is the correspondents' column. What with the man who is always warning the public against an impostor, five feet nine inches and a quarter in height, rather stout, with sandy whiskers, and a cast in the left eye—the prophet who predicts sultry weather with just the least sensation of west wind, the day before the most piercing north-easters the neighbourhood can remember—the geniuses who are always suggesting utterly impracticable ways of doing something or other—it doesn't much matter what, as their schemes are generally about as available for one thing as another—the juryman who complains of ill-treatment at the Assize Courts—and the man who can't get the seats he reserved at the Theatre Royal, and who comments on its bad management, with a supplementary essay on its various discomforts—one may extract much entertainment out of the correspondents' column. But who can wonder at "the authorities" not listening to its complaints?

THE MOORS AND MARKETS.

A LARGE number of Manchester sportsmen were on the moors on the Twelfth and got good bags. We were not out ourselves, and as nobody sent us any birds, and we could not stand paying twelve shillings a brace, we made a cheap and imaginary banquet by gazing at those hanging in Mrs. Muirhead's shop window. Mr. Elias Levy, with true sporting instincts, wore a sprig of heath in his button-hole and two feathers from the wing of a grouse in his hatband. The sporting and industrious butcher of Withy Grove was early upon Kersal Moor with his two dogs as usual, not in sporting costume, but in those habiliments peculiar to himself. Mr. Charles Calvert devoted his attention to the Moor of Venice. The Assize preserves in Strangeways were well attended, and many of the learned gentlemen had excellent sport. Mr. Leresche, had a bag well filled with briefs, and Mr. Cobbett had also a full bag, including among its contents a brace of Scotch terriers. Mr. Figgin, Q.C., bagged some devilled turkey in the morning at the Mitre, and Mr. Pontiff, Q.C., despatched a Welsh rabbit in the evening. Mr. Briefless was not out, but waits for the first of September, when he will appropriately take up his quarters at the Dog and Partridge in Corporation Street. Some very fine stags have been brought down in the stock-broking forests.

The gathering of the harvest is progressing rapidly in Lancashire. Muggins has an abundant supply of stubble on his chin, and Foozles' crop of oats on the same soil is rapidly ripening into a pale bleached grey. Walnut juice and other dyes are in much request to give the grain a rich dark tint. Such ingredients, however, are easily detected, and do not add to the beauty or value of the crop.

CATTLE.—There has been a plentiful supply of brutes as usual, and cruelty to animals has not been neglected on the streets. Veal has declined in price owing to the immense display of calves in the Prince's Theatre burlesques. The Duke Orsino, represented by Mr. Howe, showed two very large specimens in the *Twelfth Night*, and Humphrey Dobbin, Sir Robert Bramble's factotum, also produced a good pair.

POULTRY.—The supply has been good. Geese are already abundant, and the supply of ganders in Saint Ann's Square last Saturday was large. Canards have been scarce and are eagerly snapped up, but the supply was nearly exhausted during the visit of the Prince of Wales, when they were easily swallowed. Ducks and drakes are abundant, as the capital of spinners and manufacturers has been in process of conversion into these birds for some years. There have been some very nice ducks at the Prince's Theatre, but Mr. Kendal had the best specimen at the Royal.

FISH.—Soles have been in good supply in the Market Place, and besides the usual fishmongers, Southall, the owner of the patent self-acting bootmaking machine, has manufactured a large quantity. Cockles, both in the shell and in the pill, have been largely consumed, and muscles have been well supplied by the Manchester Athletes. The demand for Totnes salmon has much fallen off this season. Some very large fish have been caught in the Gazette fisheries.

THE *ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.*

IT is a little more than seven and twenty years ago that a man was struck with an idea. Ideas are not common; the man was. He was a small printer in an eastern county town, and supplemented his printing business by selling stationery and quack medicines; the idea was to print a number of cases of cure and circulate them among his townsfolk and the happy villagers going to market. He set to work, and was triumphant. The *dura ilia messorum* were subjected to many thousands of Morison's Pills, and were relieved; the printer came up to town and demanded from the wholesale house a larger commission. The wholesale house did not mislike the idea, but was in this fix. If it gave the man any more commission, it must also give more to others. It comforted the party by telling him that the larger sale would repay his larger trouble. The small printer was disgusted, and swore roundly that he would have a pill of his own.

In his dilemma a clever doctor was found, who wanted five pounds to fit him out to America. Clever doctors there are in such straits, and this one produced a formula of a pill, active about its business, quick and efficient at work, simple, efficacious, and griping. The British public likes to *feel* its pills. A *roi faineant* will not do for them; he must be like the Devil in the poem of Job, walking up and down upon the earth, and looking after business. This pill did so, but still it wanted something—a *tertium quid* without which few things succeed in Little Britain: that was, a good lie to back it. The proprietor pretended that it was life giving, and an engraver, who produced a pretty little pamphlet illustrating the life of the celebrated Marr, an old woman, who, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, lived till she was two hundred, and had her fiftieth child when she was a hundred and twenty, gave the pills the name of MARR'S LIFE PILLS. Hech, sirs! life is dear to us all, especially to those of that base, grovelling, snobbish age of a quarter of a century past. The pills were swallowed by millions; "one shilling and three halfpence per box, with the government stamp, *without which none is genuine*," was the price; and sovereigns, grown from the greasy, uneasy, and credulous shillings, rolled into the proprietor's

till. His illustrated life of Marr, with pictures by a wondrous artist, John Gilbert, of Marr standing in a sheet, for running away, at the age of 120, with another woman's husband; of Marr, dressed in armour, slaying Don Patalcon de Sa, the commanding officer of the Spanish Armada, sold the pills, and the pills carried off the life. Still the proprietor, honourable and honest soul, wanted more money. He was obliged to advertise his pills: advertisements cost money. "*Quoi faire, Monsieur?*" he asked of an engraver. "Exchange advertisements," said the other, "and start a paper, in which you can put those you get in exchange. Look how that illustrated *Life of Marr* has paid. Start a picture paper."

Under great pressure this was done. The young artist, then ready to work for little, the clever engraver, the medicine man, combined; here was great force. The great men were there; there came a great occasion. The young and beautiful Queen with her young and admirably wise husband, whose sixteen stone statues and fourteen bronze memorials have not yet exhausted all his virtues, did a very proper thing; they gave a costume ball. Trade was lively and delighted, the nobility furbished up the portraits of its ancestors and dressed up to them. The queen was Phillipa of Hainault; the prince the wise warrior Edward III. The ball was a wonderful success, the since then *ubiquitous* artist was "on the spot," and the illustrations, very wooden indeed, were bought by hundreds who went and thousands who did not go; the paper was a success too. There was no need of exchanging advertisements; it was soon felt that the *Illustrated London News* was the very best medium, as indeed it is now, for any advertiser. People liked pictures. If they can not understand politics they can shriek at a fire; if they love not theology and the calvinistic future of Hades they can wonder at Vesuvius; if they admire not misfortune and bankruptcy at home they can understand a wreck at sea; if they don't like the naughty wicked theatre they can admire Cerito drawn by John Gilbert, and Fanny Elssler showing her pretty legs about half as much *then* as young ladies do *now* at the Gaiety. The picture paper was a sweetmeat thrown to stupidity. We had the fashions, the newest music, the latest folly, all illustrated. We had pictures of every thing. Dr. Charles Mackay, once a gushing rhymester, sang ballads in type, and told his Scotch brethren to "Wait a little longer, for there was a good time coming." Mr. Alfred Crowquill wrote as well as sketched; Mr. John Timbs, laborious antiquary, used the editorial scissors and paste; while the Pillular Proprietor was himself his chief editor, and took care to see that everything popular, liberal, and protestant went in. Everybody was to be pleased; the newspaper, like Peter Schlemihl, was to be shadowless; it was to be of no party so that it could offend none. It was a great success of course. Everyone wondered at its stupidity and yawned over its articles, but they bought it in Russia to please the children, and in China and Japan to paper the walls. If Count Snobsky came of age he was illustrated; if Brown the furniture man made a perfectly useless but leafy, sticky, carved and fine art sideboard, that was illustrated; if Washleather built a set of harness, and Boxie a new brougham they went in; race cups, prize boats, prize oxen and prize pantomimes, were all illustrated to the great gain of the paper. Literature was subordinated to art. Douglas Jerrold said the bitterest things that ever mortal uttered of the proprietor's brains, but the proprietor knew what would pay, and that was all he cared about. As a rule he was generous to art; he paid John Gilbert and W. J. Linton, the wood-engraver, himself a poet, very large sums, and produced, perhaps, as fine woodblocks as anyone could; but as a rule, the paper, under his conduct, was only a picture paper, doing little or no good. Amusing, and that is all—a woman's paper, if you wish to insult woman, a mere nothing, to be looked at and thrown aside. Wordsworth, seeing with clear vision in his mountain home, the littleness of the age, the sham, the hollow pretence, the mere tradesmanlike wish for success which instigated the whole matter, was as doleful in his way as Jerrold was scornful, and sang out clearly enough his opinion. The *Illustrated London News* was established in 1842; in 1845, William Wordsworth wrote this sonnet:—

ON ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS.

Discourse was deemed man's noble attribute,
And written words the glory of his hand;
Then followed printing with enlarged command
For thought—dominion vast and absolute
For spreading truth, and making love expand.
Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute,
Must lacquey a dumb art that best can suit
The taste of this once intellectual Land.
A backward movement surely we have here,
From manhood—back to childhood; for the age—
Back towards caverned life's first rude career,
Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
Must eyes be all in all, and tongue and ear
Nothing? *Heaven keep us from a lower stage!*

Well, has heaven kept us from it? Perhaps; but, in the meantime, the success of the foolish has been enormous. Let us concede that the proprietors know best how to manage their own concern; that the "Company of Old Women," as a grave historian calls the *Times* people, know well that *their* chief duty is to make a popular newspaper, and not to play Cassandra under any circumstances. This may be all very right for the people who make fortunes, but for those who do not, and who build houses near the crater of Etna under false promises of safety, 'tis not so. A really good illustrated paper should serve both Art and Literature. Ours has done neither. It has had many opponents, one of rare talent, which it has absorbed, and it has waddled on in life in one course of undeviating and annoying success. It is like a very large mother, who has the faculty of overlying and making dull, by some peculiar act, all her children. Let us look at the number of gentlemen who have written for the *News*, and then wonder how it is we never remember an article, a column, or a paragraph. The names of most of these will be well known to our readers—Dr. Charles Mackay, Laman Blanchard, Angus Reach, Douglas Jerrold, Horace Mayhew, Henry Mayhew, Mark Lemon, R. B. Brough, G. A. Sala, J. Hain Friswell, Peter Cunningham, Roger Acton, John Latey, William Black, T. J. Gullick, the art critic, John Timbs, F.S.A., Shirley Brooks, and many others. Mr. Peter Cunningham wrote for some time a column of varieties, which was amusing; it was afterwards taken up and much better done by Messrs. Sala and Friswell, as "Echoes of the Week." The brightness of this article contrasted with the sombre hue of the other portions of the paper, and it was discontinued, Mr. Shirley Brooks writing a column in its place, called "Nothing in the Papers." Of its quality the reader of the day can judge. The leaders by the same hand are not so brilliant as to force country papers to extract them, and, as a rule, the conventional policy of the paper crushes almost all the good men and true who write for it. Once upon a time Jerrold produced a piece for old Batty, the amphitheatre and circus manager. It was full of quip, crank, and fun; the audience roared, and the dull actors absolutely acted well. The piece was an attraction. But the horses had little to do; they were in the back-ground. The manager stamped, blasphemed, and abused "them men and women," meaning the actors. "What do people want with them? the public want 'osses." He cut the piece to pieces, and the horses curvetted and stood on their hind legs, to the delight of the manager—but the fun had gone.

So it is with our picture paper. It is a picture paper and no more. "Ah!" but cries Pettifogg, "what a wonderful thing! How it illustrates the fashions! What would we give for such a paper of the times of Chaucer?" You stupid old Pettifogg, it does nothing of the sort. It illustrates fashion to make it odious, that's all. In the *Bibliotheque Royal* or the B. M., we have thousands of more minute and better illustrations of the past age than ever we can boast. Wood has killed steel—and wood is wood. But the public alone is to blame for this sorry paper *tu l'as voulu Georges Dandin.* The *Illustrated Times* was always smarter, and better, and half price, and yet the public would not buy it. Now it belongs to the same proprietors and is subordinated to the bigger paper as good literature is to bad art. Let us except from condemnation the notices of books, which are often learned and always fair, the art-criticisms, which are honest and full of information, the Parliamentary Sketches which are lively, and the sub-editorial work, which is painstaking. The paper has no editor, yet everything is to be found *in petto* in the *London News.* The sub omits nothing, except spirit, liveliness, opinion, manliness and wit. You can find the arms of the latest dead lord, but not a sound opinion. You may see in the Wills and Bequests what Jones, the *ci-devant* grocer, died worth, but you will not meet with one noble idea. You may trace in triumphant arches the progress of the Queen from Osborne to Edinburgh, but not the triumphs of her people. The *Illustrated News* is "pretty, pretty." It is looked *over*, never read *through.* It has done nothing—stay, it has done one thing—it has made a huge fortune for its proprietors.

G. TWIGG'S Patent Corkscrews. The most powerful ever invented, and being provided with a patent India-rubber pad, which forms an elastic cushion for the neck, they are warranted not to break the bottle.
Manufactory: 30, Mosley Road, Birmingham.—Sold by all Ironmongers.

THE DORMITORIES at Dr. BIRCH'S SCHOOL.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ—Master Hewlett and Master Nightingale.

(Rather a cold winter night.)

Hewlett (flinging a shoe at Master Nightingale's bed, with which he hits that young gentleman). Hullo! You! Get up and bring me that shoe.

Nightingale. Yes, Hewlett. (He gets up.)

Hewlett. Don't drop it, and be very careful of it, Sir.

Nightingale. Yes, Hewlett.

Hewlett. Silence in the Dormitory! Any boy who opens his mouth I'll murder him. Now, Sir, are not you the boy what can sing?

Nightingale. Yes, Hewlett.

Hewlett. Chant then till I go to sleep; and if I wake when you stop, you'll have this at your head.

[Master Hewlett lays his Bluchers on the bed, ready to shy at Master Nightingale's head in the case contemplated.]

Nightingale (timidly). Please, Hewlett?

Hewlett. Well, Sir.

Nightingale. May I put on my trousers, please?

Hewlett. No, Sir. Go on, or I'll—

Nightingale:

Through pleasures and palaces
Though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble,
There's no place like home.
Home, home! sweet, sweet home!
There's no place like ho-ome!
There no place like home! (*Da Capo.*)

—W. M. THACKERAY.

MR. DICKENS ON MR. FECHTER'S ACTING.

MR. Charles Dickens has contributed to the current number of the *Atlantic Monthly* an article descriptive of the acting of Mr. Fechter, who, after his appearance in Manchester, will leave England for a professional tour in the United States. Mr. Dickens speaks of Mr. Fechter as his intimate friend, and in saying a few words in reference to his merits as an actor, he wishes to introduce him to the favourable notice of the American public. From this article we take the following passages:—

MR. FECHTER AS A LOVER.

The first quality observable in Mr. Fechter's acting is, that it is in the highest degree romantic. However elaborated in minute details, there is always a peculiar dash and vigor in it, like the fresh atmosphere of the story whereof it is a part. When he is on the stage it seems to me as though the story were transpiring before me for the first and last time. Thus there is a fervor in his love-making—a suffusion of his whole being with the rapture of his passion—that sheds a glory on its object, and raises her, before the eyes of the audience, into the light in which he sees her.

In *Ruy Blas*, in the *Master of Ravenswood*, and in the *Lady of Lyons*,—three dramas in which Mr. Fechter especially shines as a lover, but notably in the first,—this remarkable power of surrounding the beloved creature, in the eyes of the audience, with the fascination that she has for him, is strikingly displayed. That observer must be cold indeed who does not feel, when Ruy Blas stands in the presence of the young unwedded Queen of Spain, that the air is enchanted; or, when she bends over him, laying her tender touch upon his bloody breast, that it is better so to die than to live apart from her, and that she is worthy to be so died for. When the Master of Ravenswood declares his love to Lucy Ashton, and she hers to him, and when, in a burst of rapture, he kisses the skirt of her dress, we feel as though we touched it with our lips to stay our goddess from soaring away into the very heavens. And when they plight their troth and break the piece of gold, it is we—not Edgar—who quickly exchange our half for the half she was about to hang about her neck, solely because the latter has for an instant touched the bosom we so dearly love. Again, in the *Lady of Lyons*; the picture on the easel in the poor cottage studio is not the unfinished portrait of a vain and arrogant girl, but becomes the sketch of a Soul's high ambition and aspiration here and hereafter.

HIS PICTURESQUENESS AND VEHEMENCE.

Picturesqueness is a quality above all others pervading Mr. Fechter's assumptions. Himself a skilled painter and sculptor, learned in the history of costumes, and informing those accomplishments and that knowledge with a similar infusion of romance (for romance is inseparable from the man,) he is always a picture—always a picture in its right place in the group, always in true composition with the background of the scene. For picturesqueness of manner, note so trival a thing as the turn of his hand in beckoning from a window, in *Ruy Blas*, to a personage down in an outer court-yard to come up; or his assumption of the Duke's livery in the same scene; or his writing a letter from dictation. In the last scene of Victor Hugo's noble drama his bearing becomes positively inspired; and his sudden assumption of the attitude of the headsman, in his denunciation of the Duke, and threat to be his executioner, is, so far as I know, one of the most ferociously picturesque things conceivable on the stage.

The foregoing use of the word "ferociously" reminds me to remark that this artist is a master of passionate vehemence; in which aspect he appears to me to represent, perhaps more than in any other, an interesting union of characteristics of two great nations—the French and the Anglo-Saxon. Born in London of a French mother, by a German father, but reared entirely in England and in France, there is in his fury a combination of French suddenness and impressibility with our more slowly demonstrative Anglo-Saxon way when we get, as we say, "our blood up," that produces an intensely fiery result. The fusion of two races is in it, and one cannot decidedly say that it belongs to either; but one can most decidedly say that it belongs to a powerful concentration of human passion and emotion, and to human nature.

HIS IAGO.

That quality of picturesqueness, on which I have already laid stress, is strikingly developed in his Iago, and yet it is so judiciously governed that his Iago is not in the least picturesque according to the conventional ways of frowning, sneering, diabolically grinning, and elaborately doing everything else that would induce Othello to run him through the body very early in the play. Mr. Fechter's is the Iago who could and did make friends; who could dissect his master's soul, without flourishing his scalpel as if it were a walking stick; who could overpower Emilia by other arts than a sign of the Saracen's head grimness; who could be a boon companion without *ipso facto* warning all beholders off by the portentous phenomenon; who could sing a song and clink a can naturally enough, and stab men really in the dark—not in a transparent notification of himself as going about seeking whom to stab. Mr. Fechter's Iago is no more in the conventional psychological mode than in the conventional hussar pantaloons and boots; and you shall see the picturesqueness of his wearing borne out in his bearing all through the tragedy down to the moment when he becomes invincibly and consistently dumb.

HIS HAMLET.

Perhaps no innovation in art was ever accepted with so much favour by so many intellectual persons precommitted to, and preoccupied by another system, as Mr. Fechter's Hamlet. I take this to have been the case (as it unquestionably was in London), not because of its picturesqueness, not because of its novelty, not because of its many scattered beauties, but because of its perfect consistency with itself. As the animal painter said of his favourite picture of rabbits, that there was more nature about those rabbits than you usually found in rabbits, so it may be said of Mr. Fechter's Hamlet, that there was more consistency about that Hamlet than you usually found in Hamlets. Its great and satisfying originality was in its possessing the merit of a distinctly conceived and executed idea. From the first appearance of the broken glass of fashion and mould of form, pale and worn with weeping for his father's death, and remotely suspicious of its cause, to his final struggle with Horatio for the fatal cup, there were cohesion and coherence in Mr. Fechter's view of the character. Devrient, the German actor, had, some years before in London, fluttered the theatrical doves considerably by such changes as being seated when instructing the players, and like mild departures from established usage; but he had worn, in the main, the old nondescript dress, and had held forth, in the main, in the old way, hovering between sanity and madness. I do not remember whether he wore his hair crisply curled short, as if he was going to an everlasting dancing-master's party at the Danish Court; but I do remember that most other Hamlets since the great Kemble had been bound to do so. Mr. Fechter's Hamlet, a pale, woe-begone Norseman, with long flaxen hair, wearing a strange garb never associated with the part upon the English Stage, (if ever seen there at all,) and making a piratical swoop upon the whole fleet of little theatrical prescriptions without meaning, or, like Dr. Johnson's celebrated friend, with only one idea in them, and that a wrong one, never could have achieved its extraordinary success but for its animation by one pervading purpose, to which all changes were made intelligently subservient. The bearing of this purpose on the treatment of Ophelia, on the death of Polonius, and on the old student fellowship between Hamlet and Horatio, was exceedingly striking; and the difference between picturesqueness of stage arrangement for mere stage effect, and for the elucidation of a meaning, was well displayed in there having been a gallery of musicians at the play, and in one of them passing on his way out, with his instrument in his hand, when Hamlet, seeing it, took it from him to point his talk with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

HIS ENGLISH.

Mr. Fechter has been in the main more accustomed to speak French than to speak English, and therefore he speaks our language with a French accent. But whosoever should suppose that he does not speak English fluently, plainly, distinctly, and with a perfect understanding of the meaning, weight and value of every word, would be greatly mistaken. Not only is his knowledge of

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English—extending to the most subtle idiom, or the most recondite cant phrase—more extensive than that of many of us who have English for our mother-tongue, but his delivery of Shakespere's blank verse is remarkably facile, musical and intelligent. To be in a sort of pain for him, as one sometimes is for a foreigner speaking English, or to be in any doubt of his having twenty synonyms at his tongue's end if he should want one, is out of the question after having been of his audience,

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AMERICAN OPINION.

Mr. Dickens's "letter of introduction" has been commented upon by several of the United States journals, and the dramatic critic of a New York paper may be taken as the representative of the American press generally, when he declares that Mr. Dickens has "put forward claims which never in this country (*i.e.* the United States) can be admitted." The same writer "feels bound to warn the public not to let their expectation be too highly raised." And he proceeds to show why:

Mr. Fechter could not, and cannot, create the same sensation as that which followed his early performances in England, for the reason that the theatrical conditions of the two countries are different. He was absolutely needed there, whereas here, although he will be heartily welcome, we have no pressing occasion for a dramatic teacher and reformer of his school. All that Mr Dickens says of the success of *Ruy Blas* and *Hamlet*, nine years ago, is accounted for by the circumstance that the English stage was everywhere in a pitiable state of feebleness and retrogression. He indicates the absurdities of the traditional Iagos and Hamlets of that day, and triumphantly describes how the old habits were broken up by Mr. Fechter. But he is not aware that in the United States these false and faded notions were discarded a quarter of a century ago, and that no actor has for years attained any reputation excepting by the very methods which he glowingly holds up to us as brilliant novelties. We omit the question whether Mr. Fechter can or can not surpass the best American representatives of his principal characters. It is only to the purpose to say that his style will not come upon us with the force and freshness which won the acclamations of all sensible citizens in England. He swept aside the rubbish of tradition, renounced adherence to effete usages, and addressed himself to the present reason, not to the past recollections of his audiences. What Mr. Dickens says about his picturesqueness, his fervour, his dash and vigour, were perfectly true nine years ago. He was a startling innovation, and although the shock of his bold reforms at first bewildered audiences, he rapidly sprang to high favour. As to the professed advocates of the old school, as might have been expected, they first endured, then pitied, then embraced. In less than a year from the time of his original appearance in London he had reached the highest point he ever attained. Since that period he has slowly but steadily fallen from it, and, notwithstanding that he is probably to-day the most intelligent and forcible actor of the romantic school that England possesses, he has almost totally lost his hold upon English audiences.

BIRTHPLACE OF POPE.—A house now being demolished opposite George-yard, in Lombard-street, London, was the birthplace of Alexander Pope, and it was there that the parents who "never caused him a blush" carried on business as silk mercers.

AUTOGRAPH OF SHAKESPERE. — Another autograph of Shakspere has been discovered, in a little Ovid, picked up some thiry years ago in Chancery-lane, London, by the Rev. H. S. Hawkins, rector of Beyton, who purchased it on account of an autograph of Dryden which it also contained. The writing is interpreted by experts as "thyne Sweetest W. Shakspere, Strathforde, Marche, 16."

A CLERGYMAN'S DILEMMA.—A gentleman asked a clergyman the use of his pulpit for a young divine, a relation of his. "I really do not know," said the clergyman, "how to refuse you; but if the young man can preach better than I can, my congregation would be dissatisfied with me afterwards; and if he should preach worse, I dont think he's fit to preach at all."

CARLYLE ON HOMER.—Carlyle said he read carefully Homer and the controversy [on Homeric unity] some years ago, and was quite convinced that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were written at different ages—the *Odyssey* by one man, the *Iliad* not; and he likes the *Odyssey* best. He thinks any one mad who holds the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to be written by one man.—*Remains of Arthur H. Clough.*

THE FARMER AND THE BAROMETER.—A story is told of a farmer who, having bought his first barometer, was more puzzled than instructed by its movements. When the sky was overcast and the rain falling in torrents the index-hand pointed to "Set Fair." Losing all patience, he took the instrument into the open-air, and exclaimed, "Now, will you not believe your own eyes?"

A STORY OF THE ELDER MATTHEWS. — Cornelius O'Dowd tells a good story of the elder Matthews, whose great affliction in life was that he never was able to lose anything. Walking one day with a well-dressed man of fashion, Matthews suddenly found out that his gloves were in the shabbiest possible condition: they were torn, soiled, and, worse still, they had been mended. Eager to divest himself of such obnoxious "properties," he rolled them up furtively together, and as they were passing over Westminster Bridge at the time, he seized a favorable moment to jerk them into the Thames. Like a man who had relieved his bosom, he now strode along, head erect and conscience easy; but scarcely had he reached the Southwark side, when a dripping sailor accosted him with the fatal gloves in his hand, saying, "I saw your honour when you dropped them, and had a sharp bit of a row to catch them with the falling tide."

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

G.H. (Hulme).—Both notes received. The "authority" mentioned doubtless laid himself open to satirical censure, but the subject possesses little public interest, and absolutely no importance.

CORRECT.—Would it not be better to write to the Editor of the daily paper which published the inaccurate reports referred to? One of the errors you cite is obviously a printer's blunder, namely, the substitution of Mr. Hulton's name for Mr. Hillkirk.

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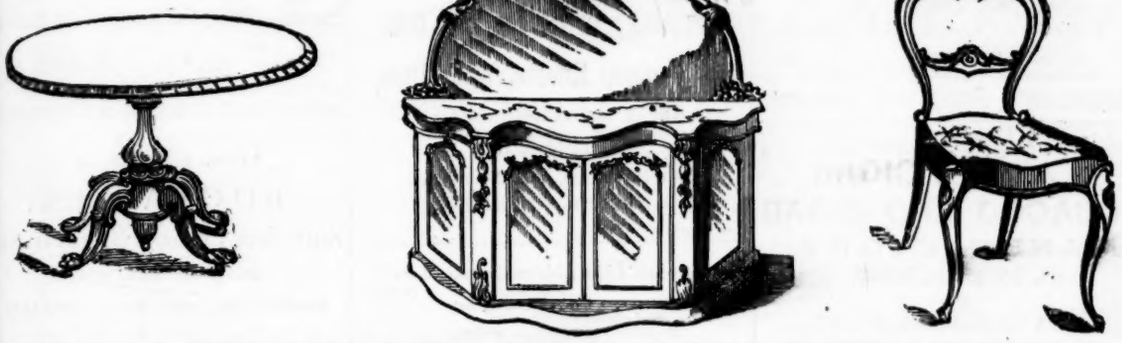

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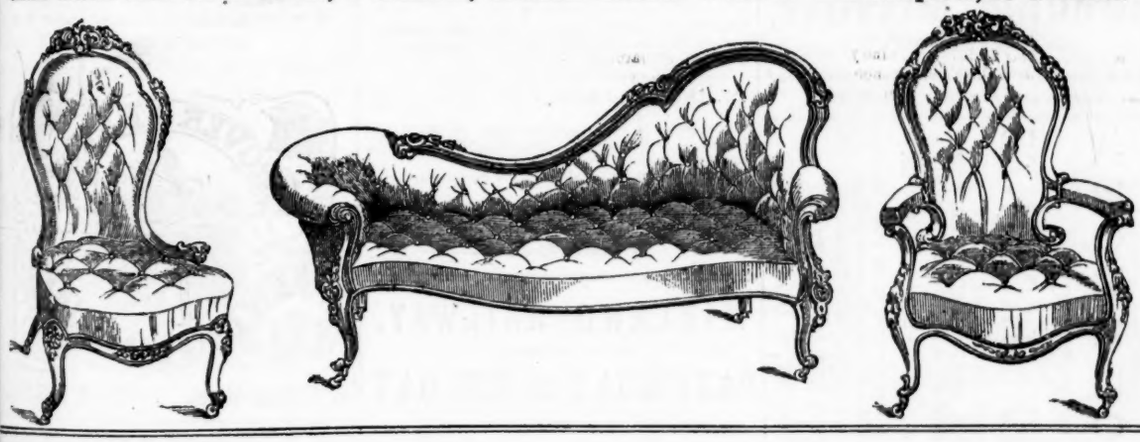

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